

December 9, 2003

Dina G. Markowitz, Ph.D. to head newly established Center for Science Education and Outreach at the University of Rochester

The University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry has named Dina Markowitz, Ph.D. the Director of the newly created Center for Science Education and Outreach. The Center's mission will be to centralize, expand, and advance many of the science education and community outreach initiatives that exist within the University.

The Center for Science Education and Outreach will utilize the unique resources of University of Rochester's scientists and facilities to develop and operate innovative programs that serve educators, pre-college students, and the general public. These programs provide hands-on science curricula during the school year as well as through summer science camps, teacher professional development, and support to enhance scientific literacy in the community. The Center includes educational research projects to study the effects of its science outreach programs on students and on teachers' classroom practices. The Center's activities will also facilitate interactions between University of Rochester scientists and the general public. Creation of the Center will enable the University to effectively utilize the expertise of Markowitz and her collaborators who have become a leading resource for the development of national models of successful science education and community outreach initiatives.

The Center's programs are supported by over \$3 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Toyota USA Foundation, private foundations, industry and local philanthropists. The Center, which will be housed within the Department of Environmental Medicine, will include two dedicated teaching laboratories and will incorporate the talents of faculty members, graduate students and staff from a number of departments within the University of Rochester as well as collaborating institutions.

Markowitz has been affiliated with the University of Rochester since 1995 when she founded the Summer Science Academy for gifted high school students. She joined the Faculty of the Department of Environmental Medicine in 1998 as the Director of Community Outreach and Education Programs for the Environmental Health Sciences Center funded by the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences. In 2001, Markowitz established the Life Sciences Learning Center, a hands-on science education laboratory which, to date, has hosted programs for over 4000 Rochester City and suburban middle and high school students and 300 teachers. The establishment of this new Center will facilitate the expansion of these science outreach initiatives to reach underserved students from throughout the Western New York region.

Markowitz earned her B.A. in Biology from Brandeis University and her Ph.D. from the Department of Genetics and Development of Columbia University, where her research focused on gene therapy. Markowitz and her husband, Dr. Gary Markowitz who is a pediatric ophthalmologist, reside in Pittsford, NY with their two children.

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